

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
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FM USMISSION USBERLIN
TO AMEMBASSY BONN
INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 4514
AMEMBASSY BERLIN UNN
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY PARIS
USMISSION NATO

CONFIDENTIAL USBERLIN 1199
EO 11652: GDS
TAGS: PGOV, WB
SUBJ: SCHUETZ RESIGNS FROM BERLIN SPD CHAIRMANSHIP

REF: USBERLIN 1164

1. ON MAY 3, AFTER DISCUSSIONS IN BONN WITH SPD
NATIONAL CHAIRMAN BRANDT, KLAUS SCHUETZ ANNOUNCED
HIS INTENTION TO RESIGN FROM BERLIN SPD CHAIRMANSHIP
EFFECTIVE NOT LATER THAN THE BERLIN SPD PARTY CONGRESS
JUNE 4. SCHUETZ' DECISION FOLLOWS BY ONE DAY THE
ELECTION OF DIETRICH STOBBE AS HIS SUCCESSOR AS
GOVERNING MAYOR BY BERLIN HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.
ALTHOUGH SCHUETZ'S PARTY FRIENDS IN BERLIN HAD EXPECTED
HIS RESIGNATION FROM CHAIRMANSHIP SOONER OR LATER,
ACCORDING TO TAGESSPIEGEL, SUDDENNESS OF DECISION
WAS SURPRISE. BERLIN SPD BUSINESS MANAGER WEISS TERMED
RESIGNATION A "PERSONAL DECISION WHICH MUST BE
ACCEPTED."

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2. NEW GOVERNING MAYOR STOBBE SEEMS MOST LIKELY
REPLACEMENT FOR SCHUETZ AS BERLIN SPD CHAIRMAN,
AND BERLIN SPD EXECUTIVE COUNCIL IS CONVENING SHORTLY
TO DECIDE ISSUE. SENATOR FOR FINANCE KLAUS
RIEB SCHLAEGER AND SENATOR FOR BUILDING AND HOUSING
HARRY RISTOCK, REPRESENTATIVES OF LOCAL SPD RIGHT
AND LEFT WINGS, RESPECTIVELY, HAVE ALSO BEEN MENTIONED

AS POSSIBLE CANDIDATES. RISTOCK, ASKED IF HE WOULD RUN FOR SPD CHAIRMANSHIP, SAID QUESTION DID NOT ARISE AT PRESENT; HE HAD MORE IMPORTANT PROBLEMS AT THE MOMENT, NAMELY REBUILDING BERLIN SENAT.

3. GDR NEWSPAPER DEUES DEUTSCHLAND TOOK PARTING SHOT AT SCHUETZ AS HE STEPPED DOWN AS GOVERNING MAYOR, CALLING HIM "COLD WARRIOR" WHOSE RESIGNATION NO ONE WOULD MOURN. NEUES DEUTSCHLAND SO FAR HAS HEAD NO COMMENT ON HIS SUCCESSOR STOBBE. LOCAL AND NATIONAL SPD OFFICIALS WERE FULL OF PRAISE FOR SCHUETZ' DEVOTED PUBLIC SERVICE AND WEST BERLIN PRESS HAS GENERALLY AVOIDED ANY HARSH CRITICISM OF DEPARTING GOVERNING MAYOR.

4. ON STOBBE, MOST OF WEST BERLIN PRESS IS CONTINUING FAVORABLE LINE, BUT MANY EDITORIALISTS ARE SKEPTICAL THAT HE WILL BE ABLE TO OVERCOME THE PROBLEMS OF HIS PARTY AND THE WEST BERLIN GOVERNMENT.

AS SPRINGER DAILY BERLINER MORGENPOST PUT IT, WHATEVER STOBBE'S PLANS ARE FOR FRESH FACES AND A NEW STYLE OF GOVERNMENT, THE OLD SPD JUMPS OVER ITS OWN SHADOW ONLY WITH DIFFICULTY.

5. COMMENT: LOCAL OBSERVERS HAVE LONG NOTED THAT OF KLAUS SCHUETZ' OFFICIAL DUTIES, THE ONE HE LIKED LEAST WAS SERVING AS BERLIN SPD CHAIRMAN. THERE IS NO SUGGESTION IN HIS LEAVING THIS POST THAT HE HAS BEEN FORCED OUT.GEORGE
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